

Connections

June 2006

Pay Raises Coming!

by Jeff Briggs

There was good news for state employees in the recently ended state legislative session. The new state budget includes a four percent pay increase for all state employees. Assuming that the governor, who originally proposed the salary increase, signs the bill and the Highways and Transportation



A bright smile breaks across the face of Senior Human Resources Technician Donielle Lawson as she thinks about the ways she, and thousands of her MoDOT co-workers, will benefit from a larger paycheck.

Commission approves it for MoDOT employees, the raise will take effect July 1.

“I’m thrilled that our workers will get an increase this year,” said MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. “This is especially good news for us here at MoDOT. This raise is well-deserved!”

Rahn showed his support of better compensation for state employees when he called upon the General Assembly to pass the four percent across-the-board pay increase during his State of Transportation Address in February.

More details on the raises, including who’s eligible and exactly how much of a raise each employee will receive, will be coming from Human Resources in the near future.

Missouri Students Draw Attention to Work Zone Safety

by Kristi Jamison

Students in kindergarten through grade six were recently invited to participate in an annual poster contest sponsored by the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) Heart of America Chapter. The students were asked to portray how roadway workers keep America moving. Missouri contest winners received cash prizes, and their artwork was automatically entered in the national contest. Two Missouri entries were selected as winners of the national contest: Dustin Gould, a sixth-grade student at Hillsboro Intermediate in Hillsboro, won second place in the grades 4-6 category, and Dakota Yowell, a third-grade student at Stowell Elementary School in Hannibal, won third place in the grades K-3 category. Pictured to the right is Dustin and Dakota’s national award-winning artwork.

Heart of America Chapter of ATSSA Poster Contest Winners

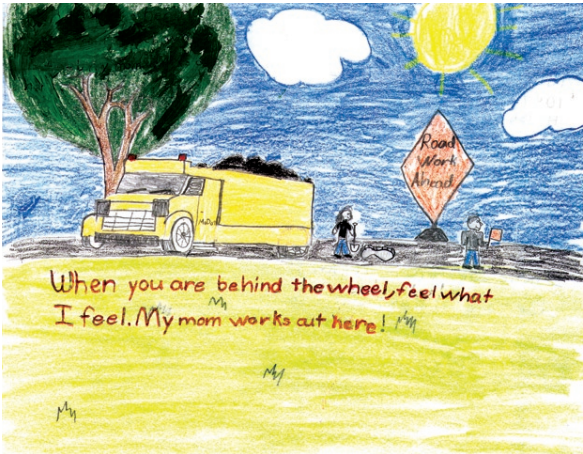
Grades K-3 Category

1st Place - Bryce Odom (first grade), Summersville Elementary School, Summersville

2nd Place - Drew Allmeroth (first grade), Central Elementary School, Union
3rd Place - Dakota Yowell (third grade), Stowell Elementary School, Hannibal

Grades 4-6 Category

1st Place - Hali Long (fifth grade), Holy Family School, Hannibal
2nd Place - Chase A. Turner (fifth grade), Stowell Elementary School, Hannibal
3rd Place - Dustin Gould (sixth grade), Hillsboro Intermediate, Hillsboro



Dustin Gould produced a heartfelt message, which earned a second place ranking in the grades 4-6 category of the national ATSSA poster contest.

No MOre Trash! Bash Cleans Up Missouri

by Reeve Booth

April is the month when many people spring clean their homes, but this spring attention was turned outside to roadways, streams and yards with a month-long litter-prevention celebration. Thousands of volunteers joined together to clean up Missouri during the month of April for the No MOre Trash! Bash.

Less trash on our roadsides and in our streams and rivers, as well as educating the public about the real cost of litter, was the goal of the second annual No MOre Trash! Bash, sponsored by MoDOT and the Missouri Department of Conservation.

“We want people to realize littering isn’t good for anyone,” said Stacy Armstrong, one of the MoDOT No MOre Trash! Bash coordinators. “It costs Missouri millions of dollars each year – money that could be spent improving our roads instead.”

To celebrate the bash, MoDOT encouraged all Adopt-A-Highway volunteers, MoDOT personnel and citizens to hold litter pickups and host educational programs to raise awareness about Missouri’s litter problem.

Thousands of people statewide banded together throughout the month to clean Missouri and make it litter free, as well as educate citizens on why they shouldn’t litter in the first place.

Many pickup and educational events were held when all was said and done. MoDOT personnel also distributed No MOre Trash!

and Adopt-A-Highway materials during the Department of Natural Resource’s Earth Day celebration on April 21 in Jefferson City.

In District 9, the city of Waynesville had a pride and arbor day where members of the community picked up trash and planted



Waynesville Pride/Arbor Day volunteers work together to make their city more beautiful and litter free.

trees around the city. District 1 also held several activities to aid in the cleanup efforts.

Across Missouri, MoDOT staff, volunteers and incarcerated crews picked up more than 70,000 bags of trash. Everyone who participated was recognized with the No MOre Trash! Bash 2006 pin.



Dakota Yowell urges motorists to Be Alert! His artwork won third place for grades K-3 in the national ATSSA poster contest.

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Kudos to District 9 team for completing Cuba project early

EAC Helps Improve ShareLeave Program

In these busy, hectic times one of the best gifts we can give each other is the gift of time. One MoDOT program, ShareLeave, is actually founded on the generous donations of time, giving employees a caring outlet in which we can help a fellow co-worker at a critical time in their life.



Annual leave or comp time donations to the program are used to extend an approved co-worker’s ability to collect a paycheck when he or she, or an immediate family member, is dealing with a serious health-related issue that has exhausted their leave time. However, in the past few years, the level of regular donations has dropped. Without the precious gift of time from fellow co-workers the program just won’t work, so the ShareLeave Committee asked the Employee Advisory Council to become involved in recommending improvements to the program.

“The ShareLeave program would not exist without the generous donations of employees,” said Dave DeWitt, deputy administrative officer – General Services Division. “The Employee Advisory Council was pleased to be called into action to identify solutions we believe will enhance this valuable program.

“We feel that we have made significant strides toward improving the program. Now there will be an increase in district participation and greater consistencies in the decision-making process, stricter confidentiality measures, and an enhanced effort to share the benefits of the program with employees. We certainly hope that donations will begin to increase again as a result of these changes.”

The EAC received many suggestions, but not all of them were feasible. The recommendations that could be implemented, along with the resulting actions, are summarized below and can also be found on the Intranet at wwwi/intranet/eac/qa.htm#I05060.

The ShareLeave Committee will be expanded. To ensure a well-balanced

representation between the districts, divisions and various operations, more members will be added to the ShareLeave Committee. One member will represent Central Office, while the other members will represent the districts. Membership will rotate between the districts, with at least one member coming from one of the larger urban districts at all times. Committee meetings will be conducted face-to-face on a scheduled basis, but in case of extenuating circumstances, members will be allowed to meet by videoconference. Current committee members are: Sandy Fritz-D6, Deborah Stuart-D8, Pam Hoelscher-Highway Safety, Janice Frazier-D10, Joe Pestka-Multimodal Operations, and Jose Rodriguez-D1.

Security surrounding documentation will be enhanced. All documentation created in the application and review of ShareLeave requests will be securely stored in the Human Resources Division. In addition, a “Confidentiality Statement” will be issued to remind and reinforce the commitment that ShareLeave Committee members make to keep all information confidential.

Communications efforts will be increased. Human Resources staff in Central Office and the districts will post ShareLeave eligibility requirements in all buildings and will provide easier access to the program’s guidelines and process to employees. In addition, the ShareLeave Committee will now publish a quarterly report in Connections giving details on the amount of leave donated and used, as well as the number of cases reviewed and the number approved. Finally, the committee will also enhance its efforts to publicize future annual donation drives and provide information, if acceptable, about how donations have helped co-workers in the past.

A new checklist will ensure each application is reviewed consistently. The ShareLeave Committee has developed an eligibility criteria checklist that will be applied to the review of every applicant to ensure consistency in the process.

“We are very pleased with the actions taken by the Employee Advisory Council,” said Pam Hoelscher, operations specialist-Highway Safety and ShareLeave Committee member. “The council is our direct connection to the employees, and we believe their recommendations are key to improving the ShareLeave program and employees’ perception of it. It truly is a worthwhile program, and we encourage everyone who can to consider donating their spare time.”

Rahn Congratulates D8 Employees On Remarkably Safe Year



MoDOT Director Pete Rahn visits with Branson Senior Crew Worker Shawn Nilges at the Ozark maintenance facility as Branson Maintenance Specialist Todd Roberts, left, and Branson Assistant Maintenance Supervisor Joey Aldridge look on. Rahn made several stops in District 8 in April to congratulate workers on no lost time accidents during 2005 - a first for any MoDOT district for a calendar year since records began being kept in 1987. Each employee also received a specially designed t-shirt noting the achievement.

For Your Benefit

Self-Service Benefits Maintenance Coming Soon

by Kristi Jamison

In today’s high-tech society, businesses and organizations are always looking for ways to increase productivity and efficiency, allow for flexibility, and yet maintain security. This concept applies to internal programs and services as well, and that is exactly what Employee Benefits had in mind in developing a new benefits system for MoDOT and Missouri State Highway Patrol employees and retirees.

Why does the MoDOT/MSHP medical and life insurance plan need a new employee benefits system?

- The installation of a new Web-based management system, designed by software consultant PeopleSoft, will essentially eliminate the tedious and bulky paperwork once associated with making decisions and/or changes about our life and health insurance benefits.
- It will help the MoDOT/MSHP Medical and Life Insurance Plan comply with the new federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy and security standards that are designed to protect your personal health information. As a result, the plan will be able to address security issues, such as allowing employees and retirees to use a unique identification other than their Social Security number.
- The new system will allow for greater flexibility with the program in the future and provide greater

efficiencies for both current workers and retirees. As a result, subscribers will soon have direct online access to make changes by themselves to certain parts of their benefit elections, such as adding or dropping dependents or designating different beneficiaries. It will also be much easier to review those changes.

- In addition, the technology-friendly system will help increase the productivity of Employee Benefits staff and minimize the amount of storage capacity required to maintain a lower volume of paper files.

When will the new system be available?

Employee Benefits expects the new system to be available this summer. Detailed information about the new system will be mailed to subscribers prior to its implementation.

How will I access my benefits information? What if I have questions?

A unique user-identification number and password will be provided to subscribers when the system becomes available. You will also have the option to change your password by calling the Help Desk. Prior to that, please get more information about the new benefits system by contacting Employee Benefits at 573-526-0138.

Oops!

Eve Black of our St. Louis District office was accidentally left off of the list of employees printed in the May issue of *Connections* who were among the original customer service representatives. Our apologies to Eve and District 6 for this mistake.

It's A Celebration!

This month marks the national celebration of the 50th anniversary of the interstate network that began with the 1956 passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act.

MoDOT and its partners will mark this historic occasion with two main events:

June 22
Our Interstates at 50: A Midlife Crisis – a public policy forum to be held at the University of Missouri-Columbia

to discuss the past, present and future of our interstates.

June 28
Public event at the Heart of St. Charles Banquet Center to pay tribute to the first interstate project, located at Interstate 70 and Fifth Street in St. Charles.

For more information, contact Sally Oxenhandler, Community Relations, (573) 751-7456 or Sally.Oxenhandler@modot.mo.gov.

GED Could Pave Way For Promotion

by Rachel Van Tuyl

Johnny Aldridge, District 10 maintenance specialist, didn't get to enjoy the nice weather last summer. That's because when Aldridge wasn't working, he spent most of his time studying for his General Educational Development (GED) exam, which he passed in July.

expect and could identify areas where they needed to focus.

Aldridge's only other suggestion was to study hard.

"You just have to sacrifice and study," he said.



Johnny Aldridge reflects on his efforts to earn a GED, which has already opened the door to new career opportunities for him.

For Aldridge, all the time spent studying was well worth the effort.

"It was the only way I could get my promotion," he said.

In January 2005, minimum qualifications for an entry-level crew worker changed from an eighth grade education to a high school diploma or GED. People who already held entry-level crew worker positions were grandfathered in at that time. However, to receive a promotion they need a high school diploma or GED.

To prepare for the test, Aldridge borrowed a GED book from the library. He said he spent about three hours a day on weekdays and more on weekends, studying and taking the practice exams in the book.

"The book helped me more than anything," Aldridge said. "That and just settling down and studying."

Aldridge suggested that others preparing for the test do something he didn't do: take the test once before studying. He said that way they would know what to

Missourians and the Interstates: Harry Truman and Rex Whitton

by Tom Gubbels, MoDOT historian

On June 29, America's Interstate Highway System will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Building the interstates was one of the largest undertakings in American history, and two Missourians played key roles in creating this amazing transportation network.

Although many historians describe President Dwight Eisenhower as the "father of the Interstate System," this title almost fell to Missouri's favorite son, Harry S. Truman. Truman always loved cars and driving. During his years as a Jackson County judge, Truman gained a reputation as a fair and efficient road builder. The Jackson County highway system dramatically improved under Truman, and several roads he helped build were later incorporated into the state highway system.

When Truman became President in 1945, he hoped to use federal funds to improve the nation's roads and create a system of interstate highways. During his first term, Truman was faced with the daunting task of converting the economy from wartime to a peacetime footing. To curb inflation, Truman felt that he had to minimize spending on federal projects, and thus he did not introduce any new programs to improve the nation's roads. By 1950, the national economy had recovered, and Truman hoped to start a new federal road-building program. The House of Representatives passed legislation in May 1950 authorizing \$70 million for interstate construction. One month later, war broke out in Korea, and President Truman was compelled to send American soldiers into battle. The war in Korea dominated the remainder of Truman's presidency, and the interstate highway system would not become a reality until the war ended and another Midwesterner, Dwight David Eisenhower, became president.

Just like Harry Truman, Rex Whitton was born on a farm in rural Missouri. He began working for the Missouri State Highway Department in 1920, and he rose from his first job as a surveyor to become the department's chief engineer in 1951. In 1961, Whitton was selected by President John Kennedy to become the Federal Highway Administrator in charge of all federal road-building programs. As the nation's top road administrator, Whitton created several federal programs, includ-

ing an office of audits and investigations, a long-term urban planning division, and a federal safety administration to study how to make highways safer for drivers. Whitton was also an advocate of environmentally sensitive road construction. Whitton instructed the states to assess the impact of new interstate construction on fish and wildlife areas.

Perhaps Whitton's greatest achievement was restoring order to the system that paid for interstate construction. During the late 1950s, legislation had set aside the "pay-as-you go" plan for building the interstate system. This led to a financial crunch in the late 1950s, and a temporary gas-tax increase and loans from the national treasury were needed to pay for federal commitments to interstate construction. Whitton badgered Congress and demanded that the original "pay as you go" plan be restored. In 1961 the Interstate Trust Fund was restored as a protected program.

On August 17, 1962, a section of Interstate 70 known as the "Southeast Expressway" was dedicated in Kansas City. The main speaker at the dedication ceremony was Federal Highway Administrator Rex Whitton who told the audience:

"The Interstate System will bring all of the nation to Kansas City's doorstep, and will take Kansas Citians coast to coast and border to border, swiftly, comfortably, and safely...Transportation has strongly helped to produce this vibrant nation whose prosperity and well-being today serve as a model and goal for the entire world."

Following Whitton's speech, a former Jackson County official commented to reporters, "I know something of this project. I wanted it built 30 years ago." Once the barriers were removed, traffic began streaming down the new expressway, and the former county official, Harry Truman, drove back to his home in Independence, on I-70.



Mrs. Callie Maude Whitton prepares to cut the ribbon, opening the new Southeast Expressway (I-70) in Kansas City on Aug. 17, 1962. Looking on are, from left to right, her husband, Federal Highway Administrator Rex Whitton; former President Harry S. Truman; and Mayor John Fox of Raytown.

Express To Success

Leading MoDOT’s Information Systems into the Future

by Matt Hiebert

Every journey begins with a single step. As Information Systems continues its journey to change the way it does business, IS Director Mike Miller wants to make the next step as easy as possible for MoDOT.

“Above all else IS wants to do what’s best for MoDOT,” Miller said. “All of the changes in MoDOT, in technology and in state government are driving IS to operate in a more efficient manner.”

This new, more efficient initiative is called Express to Success. To put it bluntly, it will change how IS operates as a division and let MoDOT as a whole take control of its technological growth.

Miller said he wants people to know day-to-day maintenance and trouble-shooting will still be at the top of the list.

“Work that’s needed to maintain current applications and technologies are a given,” he said. “We’re committed to doing all that’s necessary to maintain those and make sure our partners have everything they need.”

What will be affected are big dollar projects that previously were put into

motion without a thorough evaluation of resources, time and money.

“We’re talking about work of a discretionary nature that demands decisions be made about the sequence of what gets done first,” Miller said. “We can’t be so helter-skelter with these projects. We end up thrashing about and effectively don’t get anything done.”

In the past, major projects and requests were done on a “first in, first out” basis, which made it difficult to budget and prioritize resources. Among the changes there will be a new process to better allocate resources. The new process will empower business units and districts to rank their technological needs and work with IS to make them a reality.

With Express to Success, large technological projects will be funneled into an Information Technology Improvement Program that will help IS evaluate them and integrate them into the bigger budget and work process along with requests from other districts and divisions.

IS will then have a better view of what lies before them. Similar work will no

longer be unnecessarily duplicated, technology that may soon be obsolete won’t get a toehold in MoDOT, budgets can be better managed and IS employees can focus skills and training where they’re needed most.

“We believe MoDOT at large operates in a manner very similar to this,” Miller said. “MoDOT creates a State Transportation Improvement Program and passes it through the commission. It allows us to plan what we’re going to be doing for the next five years.”

Miller said he wants to assure everyone that the system will streamline the decision-making process, not make it more complex.

“Our partners in MoDOT have my commitment that we don’t go the other way and make things artificially harder to accomplish,” he said.

Mile Marker One, the first leg of the journey, will begin this summer. In the future, updates and informational opportunities will be posted on a permanent Intranet site at wwwi/intranet/is/E2S.htm.



Gov. Matt Blunt recognized three MoDOT employees at a special ceremony during the State Employee Recognition Day held May 5 in Jefferson City. From the left Phill Knott, D9 resident engineer, and Paul Jungmeyer, D5 senior financial services technician, were recognized for their length of state service, 47 and 48 years respectively. Lee Ann Kelly, D3 senior construction technician, received the Governor’s Award for Valor for saving the lives of two accident victims (see more on page 8).

May Service Anniversaries

5 Years

Rebecca N. Baker	D1
Terry D. Buckles	D1
Joe L. Cridlebaugh	D2
Robert L. Poor	D2
Stanley E. Weber	D2
Justin B. Dwight	D3
James M. Hawkins	D3
Michael R. Church	D4
David W. Eppright	D4
David P. Hemme	D4
Harry E. Madden	D4
Kevin W. Pugh	D4
Ian U. Ciolli	D5
Jimmy D. Wischmeier	D5
Richard A. Anderson	D6
Jason P. Boldt	D6
Robert E. Elsperman	D6
Kevin M. Geldmacher	D6
Jeff M. Laughlin	D6
Scott R. O’Brien	D6
Cynthia R. M. Simmons	D6
David J. Simmons	D6
Marc E. Lewis	D8
Claude A. Files	D9
Michael S. Frazier	D9
Erin E. Blakemore	D10
Marion S. Cora	D10
Lester N. Gates	D10
Shane A. Harris	D10
Brian P. Otten	D10
Sheila F. Swisher	D10
James L. Young	D10
Rita F. Carey-Gerhardt	CO
Damian A. Geyer	CO
Tracy L. Hickman	CO

10 Years

Michael E. Baxter	D3
Valinda J. Darley	D3
Joseph Caldwell	D4
Christopher M. Sholl	D4
Karsten M. Sommerhauser	D4
Jackie D. Stoner	D4
Kenneth L. Voss	D5
Raymond B. Wieberg	D5

Anthony M. Bradshaw	D6
Lionel L. Jones	D6
Francis E. Abramovitz	D7
Ryan L. Boyd	D7
Melissa J. Duncan	D7
Timothy A. Lee	D7
Kevin K. Marti	D7
M. S. McVey	D7
Bryan C. Ozbun	D7
Glenn W. Parrigon	D7
Michael L. Smith	D7
Ricky D. Bays	D8
Brent A. McGowan	D8
Laurel A. McKean	D8
Ronald W. Moses	D9
Nathan P. Hunt	D10
Chad E. Daniel	CO
Sharon E. Golden	CO
Leonard L. Hodges	CO
Regina R. Meyer	CO
Donna J. Roewe	CO
John J. Schaefer	CO
Carie D. Stark	CO
Karen A. Starke	CO
Dale A. Williams	CO

15 Years

Albert L. Meek	D1
Adam K. Watson	D1
Keith A. Hartwig	D2
David R. Hyle	D2
Todd A. Smith	D2
Maria K. Peters	D5
James A. Kaucher	D6
Gloria J. Mattingly	D6
Karen A. McGilvray	D6
Sheryl J. Nolker	D6
Thomas P. Stratman	D6
Judy A. Wagner	D6
Johnny C. Mathews	D7
Stephen W. Smith	D7
Michele E. Hicks	D8
Shelly L. Cauldwell	D9
Richard A. Elijah	D9
Edward J. Hess	D9
Tresa J. Pratt	D9

Mark A. Phillips	D10
Mark S. Anderson	CO
Lawrence W. Fritz	CO
Raymond J. Morgan	CO

20 Years

Charles E. Woods	D2
Edward W. Hess	D3
Herbert L. Lovelace	D3
Donald W. Vance	D3
Doug E. Wendling	D3
Darryl B. Elliott	D5
Mary K. Deaton	D6
Donald W. Lingner	D6
Teresa J. McGuff	D6
Randy M. Schneidewind	D6
Dennis A. Shefferd	D6
Roy A. Sutter	D6
Mitchell J. Thiele	D6
Jack A. Myers	D7
Larry A. Smalley	D7

Will Walker	D8
Walter Brewer	D10
L. David Fleming	D10
Michael R. Helpingstine	D10
Tommy E. Woods	D10
Thomas J. Anna	CO
Michael K. Curtit	CO
Laurie A. Forck	CO

25 Years

Dennis R. Pence	D4
Linda A. Dower	D6
Daymon O. Wray	D6

30 Years

Theodore J. Smith	D3
Dennis K. Stiefel	D3
Stephen T. Wommack	D3
Danny L. Williams	D4

35 Years

Larry R. Burke	D6
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March Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Norman Beeman	D4	42
Daniel Calton	D1	31
Donald Clawson	D4	22
Paul Cox	D8	16
Donna Drummond	D3	20
James Grindstaff	D10	30
Rodger Holton	D3	27
Harold Houchins	CO	32
Steve Kertz	D6	8
Calvin Milligan	D4	28
Charles Pratt	D3	29
Deborah Richmond	D3	26
Joan Russell	D7	22
Gary Schuett	D1	13
Michael Stelzleni	CO	34
Sharon Stone	D4	5
Gary Thomas	D5	38
Jerome Thomas	D1	23
Michael Wright	CO	18

In Memoriam

Active employees			
Robert “Bob” J. Eftink	D10	April 7	
Robert “Bob” W. Mayer	D3	April 23	
George Keeling	CO	April 30	
Retirees			
Charles R. Tucker	D4	Nov. 15, 2005	
Dale J. Hollis	D2	April 5	
Charles H. Farley	CO	April 6	
Oscar B. Waltermann	D6	April 12	
Ura “Ansel” Goodale	D10	April 12	
Ernest “Ernie” Gibson	D2	April 14	
Darrell L. Shinn	D6	April 30	
Luther B. Nichols	CO	May 1	
Frank Funston	D4	May 2	
Dale G. Winfrey	D4	May 3	



Central Office

A Day At Work From a Kid's Point of View

by Carly Johnson

My name is Carly Johnson. My dad and mom both work at MoDOT. I got to come with them to work for Take Our Children To Work Day on Thursday, April 27. I really liked being there and seeing all the work that the people do. We got to see some really neat tractors and machines that reach up to fix the light poles and can pick up and move some big things around. We also got to see the trucks that clean up the snow with some big blades attached to them. After that, we went to the sign shop to see how the signs on the roads are made before they put them out there. In the afternoon, we got to make some "asphalt cookies" from chocolate and oats to show us how the asphalt and rocks are mixed to make smooth

roads ... except you got to eat this "asphalt!" It was really good. Then we got to go to the materials lab and see one experiment where they froze a rose with liquid nitrogen and it broke into a bunch of pieces, and another experiment where it took 20 spoons of sugar to sink a diet coke in water. I really liked coming to work that day because it gives me ideas about what I would like to do someday when I get older! Thanks for giving us a chance to check out what everyone does at MoDOT!

(Carly is the daughter of Stowe Johnson, research and development assistant, and Dianna Johnson, D5 customer service representative.)



Stowe Johnson, research and development assistant in Construction and Materials, explains what a deflectometer is and demonstrates how it can determine the wear on pavement from the pressure of traffic over time.



The equipment presentation was a very popular new edition to the events held on Take Our Children to Work Day. Here Freddie Johnson, a structural steel painting supervisor in Bridge Maintenance, shows our young guests how the remote flagger works.

for more info

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MoDOT Paricipates in 2006 Earth Day With Trees and Litter Pledge

by Reeve Booth

MoDOT was one of several state agencies that participated in the Missouri Earth Day celebration Friday, April 21 at the capitol in Jefferson City. Thousands of grade-school children and other visitors flocked to the celebration, sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources.

The 2006 Earth Day slogan was "You are the Solution to Pollution," which was submitted by Dalton Stafford, a fifth-grade student at Fairview Elementary School in Carthage. Stafford's jingle was recognized during the opening ceremony as the winner of the 2006 Earth Day slogan contest, beating out hundreds of fifth-graders across the state.

Survivor: Vanuatu's Twila Tanner, a MoDOT road crew worker, assisted in Earth Day again this year. Tanner joined KRCG-TV's Rod Smith as co-host of this year's Environmental Survivor game.



MoDOT personnel handed out thousands of trees during the Jefferson City Earth Day celebration.

MoDOT personnel participated by handing out more than 3,000 white pine seedlings, compliments of the departments of Conservation and Transportation. Hundreds of people also signed the MoDOT Litter Pledge

agreeing not to litter and to help keep Missouri litter-free.



Students and adults were asked to sign a litter pledge during Earth Day saying they would not litter and that they would do their part to keep Missouri litter free.

Visitors to Earth Day also enjoyed live entertainment on the Earth Day stage by the Earth-Tones, a band of Department of Natural Resources employees who played environmentally themed versions of popular rock songs, and the World Bird Sanctuary, which brought birds of prey back to Earth Day for the first time in several years.

Schroer Receives Excellence Award for Recycling Efforts

by Rachel Van Tuyl

Field Materials Engineer Joseph Schroer recently received an award for his work in cold in-place recycling on U.S. Route 71.

Schroer received the Charles R. Valentine Award for Excellence in Cold In-Place Recycling from the Asphalt

Recycling and Reclaiming Association. The award is given annually to public officials and consulting engineers for outstanding contributions to the asphalt recycling industry.

"It was the first time we had recycled the asphalt in place on the roadway," Schroer said. "We did cold in-place recycling on the mainline pavement and then did full-depth reclamation on the shoulders."

Road reconstruction using cold in-place recycling offers a number of environmental and monetary benefits. The asphalt is efficiently reused, and roads that would take weeks to repair by traditional methods are done in days. The cost for cold in-place recycling is up to half that of traditional methods.

Schroer said he is "very happy" about receiving the award. He has worked for MoDOT for 23 years.



Joe Schroer proudly displays the plaque he received for his superb recycling efforts.

D1

Northwest

Recent Events



Elaine Justus

Take Our Children to Work Day is a major production in the Northwest District. Every year we invite employees and their children to spend the morning with us touring our different departments and finding



Holly Murphy



Elaine Justus

Assistant District Engineer Tony McGaughy was interviewed by KQTV on April 24. He explained to local viewers that high fuel prices are having more of an impact on MoDOT than the average person might expect.

Northwest District Takes Top Honors

by Elaine Justus

The Statewide Litter Awareness contest, co-sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation and MoDOT, ended this year with two of the top prizes going to schools in the Northwest District. Called the “Yes you CAN make Missouri Litter free” contest, it involved a trash can decorating competition. Cash prizes were given to the winning schools. One hundred dollars was awarded to the winners of each competition category, while the grand prize award winner received \$500, a trophy, and considerable bragging rights.

Second grade students at Northeast Nodaway Elementary won the grade K-2 competition category for their trash can featuring the likeness of the Sesame Street character Oscar the Grouch.

Students at Savannah Middle School received the grand prize award for their entry, which turned a trash can into a wheeled trash collection vehicle with the motto, “No MOre Trash, So We Won’t Crash.”



Holly Murphy



Holly Murphy

Arleasha Mays, news services coordinator for the Missouri Department of Conservation, and MoDOT’s Roadside Management Supervisor Stacy Armstrong came all the way to Northwest Missouri to present the awards on April 13. They’re the “tall kids” in the back row in the picture at the left.

It’s safe to say that the students at both schools were thrilled to be so publicly recognized. It is also safe to say that both schools were thrilled since the prize money awarded goes into their operating budgets.



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D2

North Central

Spring Safety Awards Bring Employees Together

For over 20 years District 2 has held an annual safety awards event, even before a statewide recognition program was in place. Along with the safety training, luncheon and presentation of awards, these meetings also serve as a time to offer employees information on a variety of topics from fuel contracts to Missouri's Blueprint for Roadway Safety.

To reach every employee in the district, a series of five meeting was held over a two-week period. Not only did District 2 management share information with employees, representatives from the Divisions of Audits and Investigation and Human Resources at Central Office visited the district to discuss topics

of importance, such as fraudulent waste and the next round of the job study.

"This was a good opportunity for employees to get together in their area of the district," said District Engineer Dan Niec. "We don't have a chance to do this as often as we would like, so we have to take advantage of every opportunity we have."

Some of the topics presented at the meetings were:

- District Business Plan
- District Reorganization
- Expectations for Major and Minor Roadways
- Equipment and Procurement
- Employee Benefits

Planning Future Needs

Partners interested in planning the future of our transportation system came together on April 27 to listen to each district describe future needs in their areas that have statewide significance. It was easy to see the needs across the state are vast, and vary greatly from district to district. It was also easy to see the differences in rural and urban needs.

District Design Engineer Paula Gough presented three needs that transportation partners in District 2 feel have a significant impact.

The first need is a vertical low clearance railroad bridge over Route 36 in

Linn County, which is posted at 13'9". There are only 17 bridges in the state posted with a 13'9" or lower clearance, and only three of those are outside the urban areas of St. Louis and Kansas City. At the low-clearance Linn County bridge, large trucks must be detoured for 30 to 60 miles around it. Route 36 will soon be a four-lane corridor across the entire state, and this low clearance bridge may significantly impact east-bound interstate and trans-state travel and commerce.

The second need is Route 63 from Kirksville to the Iowa state line. Route 63 will soon be a four-lane corridor



Semitrucks narrowly clear the low bridge on Route 36.

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District Engineer Dan Niec presents Debbie Przybylski with her service award. Debbie is the maintenance supervisor at New Cambria and has been with MoDOT for 18 years.

- Overview of Audits & Investigation
- Job Study
- Blueprint for Safer Roadways
- Employee Communication

An open discussion period with Dan and a time for questions and answers throughout the day, gave employees the opportunity to offer input and discuss issues important to them.

The district plans a similar series of meetings in the fall, possibly centered around the insurance meetings. Requested feedback from employees

on what they would like to have offered in the fall has already generated some good ideas.

Thanks to everyone who presented information and attended the meetings. It was important that each employee take away something that was beneficial and that they can use to help them perform the important work they do for MoDOT every day.



Director Pete Rahn makes a surprise visit to the employees at the spring meeting in Milan.

from Kirksville to Jefferson City. It is not currently known what impact a four-lane facility will have on traffic north of Kirksville.

The final need is Route 65 from Marshall to Chillicothe. This area has seen a major improvement with the new Missouri River Bridge at Waverly, and is a major corridor to travelers heading to Springfield, Branson and other tourist areas.

Additionally, the communities around Route 63 and Route 65 have seen sig-

nificant growth in the Amish population. Although a unique need to a rural area like the North Central district, safety concerns as horse and buggy share two-lane roadways with semi trucks and other fast moving vehicles are issues for consideration.

Paula requested funding to begin an assessment in these three areas to scope what impact they may have on the future of our state transportation system and define the purpose and need.



In North Central Missouri the Amish community share the road with motor vehicles.

D3

Northeast

Cave Discovery Doesn't Solve Old Mystery

Discovering caves in the Hannibal area isn't an anomaly. Several hundred caves are known to exist in the hills and bluffs in Mississippi River country near Hannibal, and given the geography, it is likely many more remain undiscovered. Forty years ago, however, many caves were found and explored during an unsuccessful search for three missing boys who were thought to have been lost in a cave near Route 79. So when more caves were recently discovered on MoDOT land near Route 79 during a Hannibal school construction project, the NE District took the lead to ensure

the caves were explored by professionals and mapped for the future.

"It was a sensitive commitment," said NE District Engineer Kirk Juranas. "We knew the community would want us to do the right thing and that was to at least thoroughly explore the caves to see if there was any evidence of the the boys."

Alan Leary, MoDOT environmental specialist from Jefferson City, was brought in to examine the cave. "Even though we didn't find anything related to the missing boys, we did invite cave biologists to map the cave, which certainly helps our relationship with the environmental community."

Jim Kaufmann is a cave ecologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation who led the mapping expedition. "We know there are hundreds of caves in this area, but very few have been mapped, so we appreciated MoDOT's efforts to document this cave for future generations.

Originally, three entrances were found, but two proved to be to the same cave and the other was impassible. Once the caves were thoroughly explored and mapped, the entrances were covered so construction in the area could continue.

To learn more about the caves and history in the area, go to www.modot.org/northeast.



Lee Ann Kelly, a construction inspector in the Troy Project Office, is presented the Governor's Award for Valor by Gov. Blunt. She is the only MoDOT employee to receive the award this year, and we are very proud of her efforts to save lives while working on the road.



Cave biologists were invited to explore the cave that was discovered near Route 79 in Hannibal as the city and the Hannibal Public Schools began construction on a new street and school in the area. Media and public interest was peaked because of the mysterious disappearance of three boys in 1967 in the area. This picture shows soda straws, which are a common feature in caves. Three arrows drawn on some of the walls were also found. Pictures of the cave can be found online at www.modot.org/northeast.

Shiny, New Guardrail



Steve Spegal (right), construction inspector, is overseeing the guardrail replacement project in the NE District. Guardrail is being replaced on Route 61 and throughout the state under one state-wide contract.

In the Public's Eye

8



MoDOT took its Highway Survivor safety game on the road to a local industry's safety fair. This gentleman had to take the trash can challenge.



Jon Hanvelt, noted news broadcaster from NE Missouri, interviews various employees during media training.

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Students Say "Slow Down" With Art



NE Missouri winners of the ATSSA Work Zone Poster Contest are (front l - r) Hali Long, from Holy Family School in Hannibal, 1st place in state in grades 4 - 6; Chase Turner, from Stowell Elementary School, 2nd place in state in grades 4 - 6; and Dakota Yowell, from Stowell Elementary School in Hannibal, 3rd place national, 3rd place state in grades K-3; These winners were honored at a reception held at a local restaurant and sponsored by MoDOT, Bleigh Construction and Bross Construction. The winning posters and pictures from the event can be found online at www.modot.org/northeast.

D4

Kansas City Area

Riverside, MoDOT Break Ground for I-635 Interchange

by Jennifer Benefield

About 200 Platte Countians braved record-breaking heat April 18 to mark the start of construction of a \$15 million full-diamond interchange at Interstate 635 and Van de Populier Street.

Sen. Kit Bond, who secured \$5 million for the project, attended the event and praised former Riverside Mayor Betty Burch for seeing the project through from concept to construction. He recalled that as Missouri Governor, he witnessed time and again the positive correlation between good transportation infrastructure and the economic vitality of a region.

“This is the beginning of the foundation of economic development for this area,” said Bond. “Instead of worrying about floods, we can worry instead about having too much traffic and what kind of businesses to have here.”

MoDOT will administer the funds and oversee construction of the project.

“We are pleased to help deliver this project,” said MoDOT Assistant District Engineer Linda Clark. “Our highway system will gain a new inter-

change, and motorists will have full access to the Riverside Horizons project.”

There will be some temporary lane closures, but I-635 will remain open to both directions of traffic during construction. The project is scheduled for completion in late-Fall 2007.

In addition to the new interchange, the north- and southbound lanes, shoulders and ramps of I-635 from Interstate 29 to the Missouri River Bridge will be resurfaced as part of the Smooth Roads Initiative made possible by Amendment 3 dollars. At least one lane of traffic will remain open at all times until resurfacing is complete in December 2006.

An \$80 million Missouri River levee project, completed in May 2005, opened up 900 acres for industrial, retail and commercial development between Route 9 and I-635. The I-635/Horizons Parkway interchange, funded by the City of Riverside and federal dollars, will increase mobility and provide for the efficient movement of goods and truck traffic through the area.



Jennifer Benefield

MoDOT Assistant District Engineer Linda Clark, former Riverside Mayor Betty Burch, and Sen. Kit Bond (l-r) break ground April 18 on a full-diamond interchange at Interstate 635 and Van de Populier Street in Riverside.

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Snap Safety Belts, or Crackle and Pop in a Rollover

by Steve Porter

If you don't know that buckling up in your truck greatly increases your chances to live in a rollover accident, you'll be getting the message over and over in the next few weeks.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is joining state and local law enforcement and highway safety partners from Missouri, Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska to get the “Buckle Up in Your Truck” message out to the pickup driving crowd. Over the

of System Management Don Hillis; Pete Bodyk of KDOT; Col. Bill Seck of the Kansas Highway Patrol; Major Dale Penn of the Missouri State Highway Patrol; Chief Ellen Hansen of the Lenexa Police Department; Sheriff Tom Phillips of the Jackson County Sheriff's Department; and Paul Broome, owner of Broome Chevrolet.

The local affiliates for NBC (KSHB 41), Fox (WDAF 4) and PBS (KCPT 19) television stations, and newspaper

reporters were on hand to hear the message that fastened safety belts can reduce fatalities in pickup truck collisions by 60 percent. Last year pickup truck drivers buckled their safety belts only about 66 percent of the time, compared to nearly 80 percent in pas-

senger cars and 82 percent in vans and SUVs.

To demonstrate the dangers of not fastening safety belts in pickups, Sgt. John Hotz of the Missouri State Highway Patrol operated a rollover simulator in which dummies belted in were safe, but when the belts were unbuckled, they flew out windows and were thrown into the path of the rolling truck cab. Hotz pointed out that even when a person is partially ejected from a vehicle, they often die when pinned between the rolling cab and the ground.



Steve Porter

KCPT and WDAF videographers tape a demonstration of the rollover simulator as a dummy is partially ejected from the driver's side of the cab.

waning weeks of spring, the message will be aired on radio and television, hammered home through enforcement efforts and publicity drives through local media.

In the Kansas City area, MoDOT and KDOT officials joined Kansas and Missouri Highway Patrol and local officers from both sides of the state line to kick off the regional campaign aimed at increasing safety belt use. The kickoff event at Broome Chevrolet dealership in south Kansas City included NHTSA Regional Administrator Romell Cooks; MoDOT Director



Steve Porter

District 4 Engineer Beth Wright thanks employees for their service in 2005. About 600 employees gathered at the district garage on Employee Appreciation Day on May 4 for lunch and to celebrate last year's accomplishments.

D5

Central

Groundbreaking Officially Starts Route 5 Project

by Holly Dentner

How do we break ground on the largest grading project in MoDOT history? We opened the program with a 22-member jazz band from Camdenton High School. We featured not one, but two choirs from the Camdenton R-III



The crowd cheered as sky diver Gary Fletcher descended with the Missouri state flag trailing behind him.

School District, over 200 students, to entertain the crowd. We broke ground not just with our five-handled shovel, but with a 30-foot trackhoe operated by our director, Pete Rahn. And to top it off, we looked to the sky as two men holding the U.S. and Missouri flags jumped from an airplane.

All this and more took place in Camden County on Monday, May 15, to celebrate the beginning of the \$44.3 million project. The ceremony officially started as members of the Camdenton High School Concert Choir sang the national anthem and the Mid County

Fire Department raised the U.S. flag on their fire truck's ladder. Eight speakers then congratulated the community and offered their thoughts on the necessity and value of the project.

Sky divers landed on the groundbreaking site just as the high school choir finished a medley of patriotic songs. The U.S. flag carried by sky diver Bryan Wolford had been flown on May 1, 2004, over the army base in Balad, Iraq.

About 150 people attended the ceremony to kick off construction for the project that will create almost seven miles of new highway from south of the



The Camdenton Chorale closed the ceremony by singing "Blue, Red and White."



Director Pete Rahn climbed aboard a trackhoe to officially break ground for the Camden County Route 5 construction project.

Niangua Bridge to near Route 7. When the new section of Route 5 is complete, it will intersect with Route 54 east of its current location, making travel through the area safer for both motorists and school buses that use Route 5 as the only entrance to the district complex.

More than seven million cubic yards of soil and rock will be excavated during construction. This is the first phase of the realignment of Route 5 in Camden County, and this portion will be complete in late 2008. McAninch Corporation will serve as contractor for the project.

Bridge Completed in Hermann



On April 20, local dignitaries helped Hermann City Administrator Steve Mueller cut the ribbon for the rehabilitated bridge on Route 100 over Frene Creek. The project was inspected by District 3.



To celebrate Hermann's wine-making heritage, the bridge railing has a grape vine design. The city helped fund the enhancements.

Students 'Dig' Missouri's Prehistoric Past

by Holly Dentner

Osage County students recently got the chance to see MoDOT at work. But it wasn't construction, traffic control, or any of our more commonly known activities. These students learned about Missouri's past while visiting a MoDOT archaeological dig.

Every time MoDOT prepares for a construction project, the area is examined for historic artifacts and structures. When cultural resources are discovered, we record and preserve as much as possible for archaeological study.

While surveying for a project in Osage County that would realign part of Route C, our archaeologists discovered the remains of a Late Woodland Period village. Typical sites from this prehistoric time period date from 650 to 900 A.D. Since starting the dig in

early May, our crew has recovered thousands of projectile points (arrow heads), pottery pieces, chip stone tools, and organic materials like animal bones and charred seeds from the site.

On Friday, May 5, almost 50 students from Fatima Middle School in Westphalia visited the site to learn more about local prehistory, archaeology, and MoDOT's project progress. It was a chance for the seventh graders to see the remnants of Missouri's native inhabitants right in their backyard.

The students asked lots of questions, from how someone trains to be an archaeologist to who gets to keep the artifacts after their recovery. Intermediate Historic Preservation Specialist Larry Grantham and Historic Preservation Specialist Ron Mayer encouraged the

students to get a well-rounded education with strong science, math, and writing skills, and to be prepared to earn an advanced degree in archaeology. They also explained that artifacts belong to the property owner. Since the Osage County dig is on MoDOT right of way, the artifacts will be studied and then stored at a state facility.

These digs are not usually open to the public, but we extended the invitation to several area schools because it provided an opportunity to students who normally wouldn't have access to this type of project so close to home. Although this dig is much smaller in scale, it's the third time in the last few years that MoDOT has opened a mid-Missouri dig to the public. In 1999

over 5,000 people toured a dig in Callaway County that revealed evidence of rare prehistoric homes approximately 3,000 years old. A 2002 dig in Miller County, the Panther Creek site, uncovered objects archaeologists believed dated back to 3,000 to 600 B.C.

The Osage County crew will finish the excavation in June and the construction project will be bid in July.



Historic Preservation Specialist Ron Mayer shows students how the color of the soil indicates the borders of the ancient housing unit.

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D6

St. Louis Area

Warmer Weather Means Ozone Season Approaches

by Thomas Miller

Those four-color traffic signal signs are back up at the gas pumps as well as in the lobbies of the District Office and the Transportation Management Center. That means the ozone pollution season is upon us. The four colors designate the level of ozone pollution that is in the air for the day. Green means the air is healthy to breathe; Red means watch out, and let us all try to do something to lessen the air pollution on that day.

Here are a few tips we can all do to clear the air everyday:

- **In Your Car** - Turn your car or truck off when not in use. Turning off our engines is a simple and effective way to reduce air pollution. Did you know that idling your vehicle for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel than it would take to restart your engine? It saves money and air.
- **At the Gas Pumps** - Do not top off the tank after the pump clicks off. Gas in the tank's neck will evaporate and will cause ozone emissions. Also, count to five after you fill up your tank. This will prevent gas from dripping from the nozzle to the ground. The last tip after you fuel is to turn the cap until you hear it click five times. Believe it or not,

all of these efforts while you fuel will help keep ozone down a lot.

- **In the Office** - Turn of lights in your office area when not in use. This keeps the heat down in the office and saves on the air conditioning. However, always keep those computers on, or IS will have a problem. Besides, your computer has a very efficient sleep mode.
- **On the Road** - Use alternative modes of transportation to and from work and during work. Many times, MoDOT employees do not car pool when jointly attending meetings. Also, walking from the District Office to the TMC is a nice alternative to driving.

The St. Louis Clean Air Partnership (SLRCAP), in which MoDOT is a board member, is asking individuals, businesses and large agencies in St. Louis to "choose a better way at home, at work and on the road" where it would positively impact the air quality.

To learn more about St. Louis' ozone season and see up-to-date ozone forecasts, you can log onto www.cleanair-stlouis.com, or call the ozone hot line at 1-800 LUNG USA.



Megan McEntee

(L-R) Daysia Hibbler, daughter of Kiwana Davis, Mindy Lawrence and her stepson, Jamie, visit the Administrative Office and talked to Edie Richardson about MoDOT during Take Our Children To Work Day on April 27.

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Band of Four Takes Tour of I-44

586 miles. Nine hours. Two days. One interstate.
by Christopher Sutton

It was a road trip of sorts, but certainly not to any popular spring break destination. It was all business for four MoDOT employees who embarked on the first ever Interstate 44 work zone excursion in late April. The task: evaluate the 26 work zones along the entire I-44 corridor, from the Illinois state line to the Oklahoma state line.

Central Office Technical Support Engineer Scott Stotlemeyer, Central Office Traffic Studies and Corrections Engineer Dan Smith, Senior Traffic Technician/District 6 Work Zone Coordinator Maurice Neil and District 6 Senior Community Relations Specialist

The rest of the trip on Thursday was relatively uneventful. After a night's stay in Joplin, the team headed back toward St. Louis on eastbound I-44 on Friday. The eastbound trip was also uneventful, with only a brief slowdown in the Cuba work zone.

After the trip was complete, it was time to reflect on the good and the bad of the many work zones the team encountered.

Stotlemeyer said his top two concerns after traveling the corridor were the work zone speed limit continuity/appropriateness and work zone reporting.



Christopher Sutton

Traffic backs up on a ramp while waiting to enter westbound Interstate 44 near Cuba. The Interstate 44 work zone near Cuba required traffic to travel head-to-head through early May.

Chris Sutton all hopped in the car with one thing on their minds: work zones.

Neil said after various videoconferences, e-mails and meetings on the statewide I-44 work, he thought it would be a good idea to actually see how all the coordination efforts worked.

"I wanted to see how other districts operated work zones and just experience the I-44 corridor from a tourist's perspective."

The trip began on westbound I-44 in downtown St. Louis on a Thursday morning in late April, which actually started off a little shaky. The time was around 9:45 a.m., and lanes were closed on westbound I-44 just west of Route 141. Traffic was at a standstill.

Neil was our team "pilot" and patiently guiding us through the work zone when all of a sudden a semi started to pull over right into our lane without looking. It was almost a short trip for the team, but thanks to Neil's quick maneuvering we avoided any major incident.

The next big work zone we encountered was near Cuba. Traffic was traveling head-to-head, divided by delineators only. We entered the work zone around 11 a.m. with no major slowdown. It took us about 15 minutes to travel 13 miles through the work zone.

"There were instances where the speed reductions were not the same for the same degree of risk and were the same for differing degrees. Sometimes these were within miles of each other."

There were some good things too. There were never really any major slowdowns on the days the team traveled (the average speed limit was about 65 miles per hour across the entire corridor), and the reduced speed limits and the lane closures were confined to where the work was actually going on. Neil said most of the work zones were also very well maintained. "Most of the signs that we encountered were clean, reflective and fairly easy for drivers to read."

Each work zone was given a grade, which was based on signing, striping, work zone devices and many other criteria. "We will share the results with the appropriate district staff and input them into the work zone inspection database so the data can be used in the reporting of the Tracker measures relating to work zone mobility and visibility," said Stotlemeyer.

I-44 Corridor Grade: B

D7

Southwest

Crew Worker Recognized for Volunteer Spirit

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis



Rep. Barney Fisher, middle, presents Charlie Greife, left, with a resolution while District Engineer Becky Baltz looks on.

On April 28, Adrian Senior Crew Worker Charlie Greife was recognized by State Representative Barney Fisher for his volunteer efforts with the Butler youth and the Medical Missions Foundation (MMF). During a training session with other maintenance employees, Greife was honored with a House of Representatives resolution, given to him by Rep. Fisher.

a sterilizer to sterilize the equipment and handed supplies to the surgical nurse.

“It felt good to know what we did impacted someone’s life,” Greife said. “They’ll always remember someone tried to make their life better.”

Greife plans to return to Romania this fall.

Last fall, Greife traveled to Romania with medical and non-medical volunteers from MMF, which provides medical equipment and care to third-world countries. Greife was an operating room assistant who ran

Take Our Children to Work 2006

Approximately 100 people participated in District 7’s half-day event.



From left to right Kristi Bachman and Regina Shipley of Design and Michelle Banning of Right of Way build a town with the kids’ help.



Assistant Signal & Lighting Electrician Dustin Thomas explains how signals work.



Resident Engineer Mike Middleton explains to a very curious audience what it takes to build Jasper County Route 249.

Life After MoDOT...D7 Retirees’ Corner

Mary Hoagland: Life is Good, But Not Always Easy

by Lita Cambers

Mary Hoagland’s career with MoDOT began in June 1947 when she was 17 years old. She worked for \$5 a day as a stenographer.

Mary quit her job in 1952 when her first child was born. She came back in 1954 for six months and then quit again to stay home with her growing family.

She returned to MoDOT for the third time in 1968. By the time she retired in 1993, she had been a stenographer, senior stenographer, secretary to two district engineers and administrative secretary for three district engineers. And she worked in all three MoDOT district offices in Joplin throughout the years.

Mary’s husband Don retired from his auto parts business after she retired

from MoDOT. They enjoy their yard, garden and doing projects around the house. They have also enjoyed going to auctions and filling up six storage units with treasures (all labeled as Don’s stuff, of course).

Since Mary retired, some bad luck has come her way.

“We have had bad luck at times, but it always turns out for the best,” Hoagland said. “For instance, our little cabin on Sugar Creek was smashed by a cement truck but was replaced with a nice, new house at a safer location.”

Mary’s daughter Susan was ill for about three years, and even doctors at Mayo Clinic couldn’t find the problem. All is well with her now.

Mary and Don were in an auto accident in February 2004 that left Don



Mary and Don Hoagland are pictured in their garden.

home to help them, and their other daughter Linda and son David helped however they could.

“I feel so fortunate to have a wonderful husband, three children and their families all living close to us,” Mary said.

The year after the auto accident, Mary’s daughter Linda was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. She underwent treatment in Little Rock, Ark., where she had two

with short-term memory loss and a broken right ankle. Mary suffered from a broken wrist, kneecap and collar bone and was confined to a wheelchair for three months and underwent therapy for another three months. Their daughter Susan moved back

stem-cell transplants and chemotherapy. Linda is in remission now.

“Life is very good right now,” Mary said, “and I know God will be there for us always.”

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D8

Springfield Area

D8 Team Poised for Highway Emergencies In I-44 Work Zone

by Bob Edwards

A beefed-up program to handle traffic emergencies during a major Interstate 44 construction project in Laclede County involves forming an emergency response team made up of 20 maintenance crew workers from Lebanon, Conway and Marshfield.

The team will work I-44 when it is reduced to two-way traffic east of Lebanon from early June to mid-August.

The eastbound lanes will be closed for rehabilitation between the Route F interchange at Sleeper and the Route 133 interchange at Hazelgreen.

District 8 also is operating a “motorist assist” vehicle within the 10-mile long work zone to help reduce the time that a vehicle with mechanical problems may be blocking traffic. The specially-equipped pickup is borrowed from District 9, which used the vehicle during its I-44 reconstruction project at Cuba.

The rehabilitation project, with APAC Missouri, Inc., as prime contractor, includes making major pavement re-

Traffic-Flow Tools For I-44/Lebanon Project

- **Emergency “Pull-Offs”** – 20 eastbound pull-offs built; 180 feet long and tapered out to 8 feet wide.

- **Added Electronic Message Boards** – Traffic-sensitive boards will provide real-time updates to eastbound drivers on where to merge into one lane.

- **Alternate Routes** – Information and maps targeting local drivers are distributed, showing alternate routes in adjacent areas of Laclede, Pulaski and Camden counties to avoid I-44. The South Outer Road will be used to relieve congestion on I-44.

pairs, laying a 1-inch layer of asphalt, then pouring 8 inches of new concrete. Three bridges, including the eastbound bridge over the Gasconade River, also will be rehabbed.

The project is important to keeping I-44 in good condition, especially since the roadway carries so many trucks and tourists and is approaching I-70 levels in traffic volume, District Engineer Dale Ricks said.

As crucial, he said, is the need to keep traffic moving during construction.

“We’re going to extreme efforts to minimize impacts to I-44 traffic,” he said.

The emergency response team established for the I-44 project adds to the effort that District 8 had begun to help police, fire and ambulance services deal with I-44 traffic when wrecks and other incidents occur. The team is scheduled to work in overlapping shifts to cover peak travel hours from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Thursday through Monday while traffic is head to head.

Crew workers from Drew, Nebo, Dove and some from Marshfield are backing up the emergency response team by handling maintenance in the entire area. Their work hours are 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Besides changing work hours, those involved in the emergency response team also are putting off vacations and making other family adjustments, said Area Engineer Jim Blackburn.

“They’ve really stepped up to the plate and accepted the task at hand,” Blackburn said.



D8 at Work

Top: Hollister Crew Worker Duane Johnson mows along Taney County Route BB in one of many district mowing operations in May.

Middle left: Senior Human Resources Specialist Jaylyn O’Connor works with daughter Whitney Rawhouser during Take Your Children to Work Day.

Middle right: Senior Community Relations Specialist Angela Eden, left, and Outdoor Advertising Permit Specialist Jessica Sawyer help the Route 66 Association of Missouri with a ribbon-cutting for the historic road’s designation as a Scenic Byway. This is a strip of old Route 66 near Kearney Street (Route 744) and Glenstone Avenue (Loop 44) in Springfield.

Bottom: Springfield Senior Construction Inspector Gail Hannaford checks the asphalt being laid in a resurfacing project on Chestnut Expressway (Business 65) and Route 65 in Springfield. This is one of the district’s Smooth Roads Initiative projects.

Smooth Roads Push Continues

by Bob Edwards

Ongoing sign replacement as well as concrete repairs and shoulder upgrades in several areas are the main maintenance tasks left in District 8’s preparation work ahead of Smooth Roads Initiative contractor projects.

Overall, the district entered spring ahead of schedule on the work needed to be completed on 307 miles of SRI routes (out of 2,200 miles statewide) as contractors come in, said Assistant District Engineer Matt Seiler.

“A mild winter helped us out,” Seiler said, enabling crews to keep going on SRI prep work instead of plowing snow.

From planning to performing the actual work, he said, everyone has worked together. That includes maintenance crew workers from various areas joining forces, he said.

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Lampe Maintenance Supervisor Retires

by Angela Eden

Service: 30 years
(Hired Jan. 5, 1976)

Career: Crew worker to senior crew worker, Lampe, 1976-2001; maintenance specialist, Branson, 2001; maintenance supervisor, Lampe, 2003

Memorable Work: Serving on district mowing committee; district trainer for flagging and mowing



Lavelt Horn

Changes: Increased traffic, traffic going too fast, more close calls for employees working on the road

Quote: “You go out there and do the best you can do.”

Post-MoDOT Plans: Spending more time with wife, Patty, and their 11 grandchildren; fishing, hunting, golf

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D9

South Central

Beyond the Call: Managing I-44 traffic during construction

Few would disagree that the role of a maintenance crew is largely defined by the roads it is responsible for maintaining. Each crew has a unique set of challenges presented by the terrain, people and demands it is accountable for.

For some crews, managing a portion of an interstate is among those challenges. The Cuba Maintenance Crew is one of many groups who find Interstate 44 running through their back yard. With a successful 12-mile total lane reconstruction project now open to traffic, much of the credit goes to the efforts of the Cuba Crew during the job.

A lot of lessons were learned during the 2005 construction season. These included on-the-job training for traffic management. With back ups resulting from MoDOT work zones, it was important that District 9 quickly step up to the plate.

The Cuba crew responded to the call by devising and employing techniques to move segments of traffic back ups off the interstate and onto detour routes. Gradually, the back ups would subside, traffic would begin to move again and work continued. While this may sound simple, the realities faced by interstate crews such as Cuba are more intense than the casual observer might realize.

By 2006, the second year of major interstate construction, the Cuba crew had traffic management down to an art. This did not mean, however, their challenges were over, or even diminished.

14 Cuba Maintenance Supervisor Bob Cunningham knew from experience he had to make adjustments to keep up. One of the district's three emergency response trucks was delivered to the maintenance building and his crew

received special training designed to heighten their sensitivity to traffic habits. In addition, he began fine-tuning the work schedule.

Cunningham knew one phone call or accident could change the entire course of his crew's day, so efficiency was key. He stretched manpower through the week to cover routine duties and wrapped weekend and overnight hours in to assure coverage during peak traf-

fic effort to reduce back ups and prevent accidents.

Just as they had learned in 2005, members of the Cuba Crew knew they had to rely on their senses to keep traffic delays from getting the best of them. As soon as the slightest gap in traffic occurred, they took their posts and began lighting up the radios and cell phones.

By the time the project reopened to traffic, the crew had worked seven consecutive weekends. Approximately 26 incidents requiring their attention occurred in the work zone during that time.

Resident Engineer Randy Mayo pointed to the Cuba Crew's handling of traffic during the lane reconstruction project as a major factor in the successful, early completion. "Opening the



Work Zone Management Team left to right: Tom Geisler, Rick Gerlemann, David Smith, Jake Keeney, Bob Ringeisen, Derrick Wigger, Brian McMillian, Gary Sieber, Bob Cunningham, Mary Jane Bruning, Michael Halbert, Jason Basham, Dave McGinnis and Carl Mosley. Not pictured are Robert Merritt and Jason Harmon.

fic times on Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays.

It was during those peaks and as incidents occurred that employees were asked to step dangerously close to traffic. These individuals were armed only with safety vests and traffic control equipment as they urged motorists, who were often traveling at excessive speeds, onto detour routes in an

Superintendent Charlie Schroyer would hit the outer road system and report how the big picture looked. The crew would divide up to manage the back up from its earliest point to the peak.

Cunningham and the more seasoned crew members would position themselves at the base of the ramp while others stood ready to direct traffic as it hit the top of the interchange. Even as traffic flow would begin to improve, the crew did not let up. They knew their work was not finished until vehicles were able to move at the posted speed with good distance between them.

The true test of their endurance came when they cleared a back up only to be called out again due to an accident, which started the entire scenario all over again. Or, when they had to return to the maintenance building to finish a day's work. The call reports and work plan items only took a back seat temporarily.

project 20 days ahead of schedule was a proud accomplishment for District 9," he said. "I believe the quick response to traffic delays and other incidents by the maintenance crew made a huge difference in our ability to keep the project rolling at a good pace."

District Engineer Tom Stehn commented on the team's commitment to their jobs. "I am extremely grateful to the crew for playing such an important role in our success on the Cuba project," Stehn said. "This is an excellent example of how maintenance and construction work together as one team to serve the people of Missouri."

"I appreciate the many long and difficult hours put in as well as the dedication displayed by the Cuba Maintenance Crew. The demands placed on them many times resulted in their being pulled away from their homes and families. They are an important part of our valuable MoDOT District 9 family."

The lane reconstruction project began March 13, 2006. The expected completion date was May 25, 2006.

WORK ZONE Management Team

for more info

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D10

Southeast

Searching for Solutions

The dilemma? How to improve a section of roadway that has pavement failing from water seeping through it.

The problem started following a construction project to place asphalt shoulders along Route 67 as well as some pavement repairs. However, after the project was completed in 2000-2001, water and mud began pumping through the pavement at the joint locations when under traffic.

Since this time, the MoDOT pavement repair team has been continuously replacing concrete along the route while exploring different types of treatments to make a long-term difference.

Area Engineer Lindell Huskey said, "The undersealing process was discussed extensively. We ultimately decided to do some test sections using the hot asphalt process."

The team felt that the hot asphalt pumped under the pavement would seal water at the joint locations in addition to filling the voids under the pavement.

"We tried two different methods of placement to see which would give the best results," Huskey said. "We are happy with the initial results and can tell a difference in the driving surface that has been undersealed and the surface that has not been treated."

Resource and Development Engineer John Donahue recently tested the area with the falling weight deflectometer machine comparing the test sections with the pavement that received no treatment.

Huskey added, "We hope to hear back from John soon with the results and hopefully a long-term solution."



A worker with Missouri Petroleum injects hot liquid asphalt in a pavement test section along Route 67 south of Poplar Bluff.

District Holds Project Development Workshop

Project Manager Eric Krapf organized a first-of-its-kind project development workshop in April. Project managers, squad leaders and senior designers led roundtable discussions and mini-workshops on topics ranging from Geopak to how projects are added to the STIP.

"We've had a lot of new designers hired on in the last year," Krapf said. "The workshop was a good way to educate them on some of our processes, plus it was a good refresher for everyone."

The day long workshop featured eight simultaneous sessions, which made the

groups much smaller and made questions more easily asked and answered.

"All the presenters worked very hard on making the information presented interesting and useful, and it seems everyone who attended was very pleased with the outcome," Krapf said.

"We are so busy with Route 67, but this was very worthwhile," said Intermediate Highway Designer Anita Easton. "I know I benefitted from it, and the new designers in our squad said it was very helpful for them, too."

The designers were so pleased with the workshop that more are in the works.

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Work Zone Safety ... Priceless

More than 400 students are educated on work zone safety during recent school assemblies.



Students at Valle Catholic School in Ste. Genevieve participate in the Southeast District's interactive work zone safety assembly.

"Building a new bridge-\$2,500,000. Paving one mile of highway-\$30,000. Having my dad come home safe from work everyday ... priceless." It may not be a new concept, but the message brought to the forefront by this fourth grade poster winner still has impact.

"It is priceless to get moms and dads home safely every night," said District Engineer Mark Shelton. "That's the entire focus of our work zone safety campaign. We want the moms and dads who work for us to go home safely to their families every night, and we want the moms and dads who drive through our work zones to make it home to their families as well."

District 10 has been taking that message to southeast Missouri children for six years now.

"The results have been outstanding. All you have to do is look at the poster entries to know these children understand the importance of the work zone safety

message," Shelton said. "They have a better chance relaying that message to the adult drivers in their lives than we do."

The annual contest was open to third through sixth graders in the 14-county Southeast District. A work zone safety coloring contest was also held for two to five year olds. More than 1,000 entries were received in the contests.

As part of the prize package, the school of each first place winner is offered the opportunity for an interactive work zone safety assembly hosted by the Southeast District.

This year, assemblies were held in Fredericktown, Farmington, Ste. Genevieve and Benton, with more than 400 students and faculty learning first-hand the importance of work zone safety.

Winning entries are on display in the lobby of the district office and on the district website at modot.org/southeast.

Take Your Children to Work Day 2006



Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

Community Relations

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Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.



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Interstate Guard Cable Cuts Down on Head-on Collisions

by Reveen Booth

The installation of hundreds of miles of guard cable on Missouri highways has proved successful in reducing cross-median crashes. A study completed

this spring on Interstate 70 showed that guard cable succeeded in stopping cars from crossing into the opposing lanes of traffic 94 percent of the time.



Guard cables restrained this tractor-trailer from crossing into the opposing traffic lanes on Interstate 70.

Between 1996 and 2005, more than 400 people were killed and more than 2,400 were injured in cross-median crashes on Interstates 44, 55 and 70 in Missouri.

On I-70 in 2002, there were 24 fatalities involving cars that crossed over the median. In 2005 after the installation of guard cable on most of I-70, there were only six fatalities involving crossovers. Of those six, four were in locations without guard cable.

“Median guard cables are effective in reducing the number of disabling or fatal cross-median crashes, and they are cost-effective,” said MoDOT State Traffic Engineer Eileen Rackers. “The cables are hit often, and lives are being saved.”

On I-44 where guard cable has yet to be installed, the number of fatalities from

2002 to 2005 rose from 16 fatalities in 2002 to 25 fatalities in 2005.

The strong push for the installation of guard cable on Missouri highways first came in 2002. Guard cable is installed on interstates with less than a 60-foot median. I-70 has been almost entirely lined with guard cable, while Interstates 44 and 29 should be done by next year. Interstate 435 also has guard cable installed along it.

“Guard cable is one of the best things we’re doing right now in terms of safety,” said Brian Chandler, traffic studies and corrections engineer. “Guard cable has been very successful in reducing the number of fatalities and disabling injuries on Missouri interstates.”

New Roadside Markers Sprout Up Along Missouri Interstates

New roadside markers going up this year will help travelers instantly determine their exact location and direction of travel on Missouri’s interstate highways. The markers are important emergency response devices, allowing stranded motorists to pinpoint their location for quicker assistance.

“These new roadway markers will be a big help to travelers, and we’re pleased to put them up along all our busy interstates,” said Missouri Department of Transportation Director Pete Rahn. “About 50 million miles a day are traveled on Missouri interstates, many of them by people unfamiliar with the area. If they get lost or stranded, it can create a very dangerous situation. They need to know where they are when they ask for help – these signs give them that vital information.”

Missouri is one of the first states in the nation to make extensive use of these markers, which were recently approved for interstates by the federal government.

We are in the process of installing the new markers and plan to have them in place along all of Missouri’s 1,200 miles of interstate highways by the end of the year. The green signs will be placed every two-tenths of a mile along the right edge of the highways, going in both directions. They will show the road’s name, direction of travel and exact mileage location, down to the nearest tenth of a mile.

“Many drivers, when they’re stranded by the side of the road, can’t describe to emergency responders where they’re located,” said MoDOT Signing and Marking Engineer Tom Honich. “By looking at a nearby sign they’ll be able

to tell what highway they’re on, what direction they’re going and the specific mileage locator. This will save time, and could save lives.”

The new signs will replace existing mileage markers, which are smaller and are placed only once per mile with no route information, as well as the white posts that are placed every tenth of a mile to help locate the edge of the shoulder when visibility is poor. Replacing both sets of older signs with the new markers is estimated to save more than \$200,000 a year in maintenance costs.



New roadside markers are easier to read and provide more valuable information to motorists.